

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 MCT-01 HA-05 ACDA-12
/097 W

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O R 201032Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6858
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE 343
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0922

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, MILI, LE, SAY
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION REPORT, FEBRUARY 20, 1300 HOURS
LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 0919 (DTG 181120Z FEB 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: A SEMBLANCE OF NORMALITY HAS RETURNED
TO THE BEIRUT AREA. MANY OF THE LEBANESE INVOLVED IN THE
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FAYYADIYAH AND FURN ASH SHUBBAK INCIDENTS MAY BE IN HIDING.
EMBOFFS SAW SYRIAN TROOPS IN AL MARUJ AND DUHUR ASH SHUWAYR.
THE RELATIVE CALM HAS HEIGHTENED SPECULATION ABOUT A CABINET
RESHUFFLE. DAILY SITREP WILL BE DISCONTINUED. END SUMMARY.

2. A SEMBLANCE OF NORMALITY HAS RETURNED TO THE BEIRUT AREA,
AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW MAJOR SECURITY INCIDENTS.

SOME SCHOOLS IN THE EAST BEIRUT AREA REOPENED ON FEBRUARY 20, BUT THE SECTION OF THE MAIN DAMASCUS ROAD IN FRONT OF FAYYADIYAH BARRACKS REMAINED CLOSED.

3. DANY CHAMOUN RETURNED FROM DAMASCUS AFTER TALKS WITH SYRIAN LEADERS AND FOUND THAT THE SITUATION WAS RETURNING TO NORMAL, ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS. DORY CHAMOUN TOLD REPORTERS ON FEBRUARY 20 THAT "NOBODY IN LEBANON EVER THOUGHT OF OPPOSING THE SYRIAN ARMY OR THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE."

4. THE JOINT INVESTIGATIVE COMMISSION HEARD MORE WITNESSES THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 20.

5. NEVERTHELESS, MANY OF THE PARTIES ACCUSED BY THE SYRIANS IN BOTH THE FEBRUARY 7 FAYYADIYAH INCIDENTS AND THE FEBRUARY 15 FURN ASH-SHUBBAK KILLINGS MAY BE IN HIDING BY NOW. BOTH DANY CHAMOUN AND KARIM PAKRADOUNI TELL US AT LEAST SOME OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FURN ASH-SHUBBAK KILLINGS ARE HIDING AT BACHIR GEMAYEL'S WATER-FRONT "LEBANESE FORCES" HEADQUARTERS. PAKRADOUNI SAYS SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASAD IS DETERMINED NOT REPEAT NOT TO OVERREACTIN LEBANON.

6. MORNING OF FEBRUARY 20, EMBOFFS SAW THE FOLLOWING: IN AL MARUJ, FOUR SYRIAN AIRBORNE SOLDIERS WERE MANNING A CONFIDENTIAL

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CHECKPOINT, BUT NO OTHER TROOPS WERE IN EVIDENCE. IN CENTER OF DUHUR ASH SHUWAYR, THERE WERE FIVE SYRIAN TANKS AND TWO SYRIAN BMP ARMORED VEHICLES, AND SYRIAN SPECIAL FORCES TROOPS WERE MANNING TWO CHECKPOINTS, BUT THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF MASSIVE REINFORCEMENTS. SYRIANS HAD ALSO SET UP HEADQUARTERS IN BUILDING ON CITY'S MAIN SQUARE. ON HILL OVERLOOKING TAL ZATAAR, SYRIANS HAD INSTALLED SECTION OF 122 MM ARTILLERY PEICES. SYRIANS HAD ALSO OCCUPIED HILLS OVERLOOKING NAHR AL KALB TUNNEL.

7. THE RETURN TO RELATIVE CALM HAS HEIGHTENED SPECULATION ABOUT MAJOR MOVES TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. THE PHALANGE'S VOICE OF LEBANON SAID ON FEBRUARY 17 THAT THE MOST PROMINENT ISSUE FOR THE MEMENT WAS A CABINET RESHUFFLE.

8. WITH THE RETURN OF RELATIVE CALM, THIS WILL BE OUR LAST DAILY SITREP FOR NOW.
PARKER

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NNN

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